

# Guard ME

*A Quarterly Maine Army National Guard Publication*

Also:  
SECFOR II - "The  
Best of Us"

JEOPARDY! Army  
Style

Pursuit of Dreams;  
Pursuit of Wings

240th Engineer Group  
Off To Afghanistan



This Issue

Major General Bill Libby  
greet members of the  
152d Maintenance Company  
as they arrive at Ft. Dix, NJ,  
returning from their mobilization  
to Iraq



### On the Cover...

MG Libby greets Soldiers of the 152d Maintenance Company as they arrive at Ft. Dix, NJ. Story on their return home on page 6. Photo by MSG Angela Blevins

# News from the TAG★★

By: MG John W. Libby

## Operation Jump Start Southwest Border (SWB) Support

On 15 May, 2006, we learned that the President of the United States, through the Secretary of Defense, had authorized the use of Army and Air National Guard forces to support security operations on the Southwest border (SWB) in support of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agency. The National Guard will provide up to 6,000 personnel, primarily in an Annual Training status, in the states of California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas. The initial mission set includes requirements for Engineers (build and repair roads, barriers and fences and construct facilities), Aviation (fixed and rotary wing aircraft for transportation and reconnaissance) and Entry Identification Teams (monitor the border and report to law enforcement). I have also directed that the Air National Guard communications capabilities be part of our mission consideration.

The concept of the operation is that the Adjutants General of the four Border States will establish a Joint Task Force (JTF) to receive National Guard forces from other states on a rotational basis.

When I briefed the Governor, his primary concern was that the mission fit the normal training model (IDT and AT) and not negatively impact the soldiers, their families and their employers by requiring another lengthy deployment. I assured him that this was an AT mission (up to 21 days) and did fit the normal training model and our participation would be based on the training value for any given unit. In fact, the 133d Engr Bn did perform a similar mission in support of the border in San Diego, CA several years ago.

With the Governor's concurrence, the Maine National Guard Southwest Border Mission Support Plan was developed. While the desired course of action



would be a Brigade level Task Force containing elements from the 286<sup>th</sup> POL Battalion (Military Police, Transportation, Maintenance, Communications), the 133d Engineer Battalion and a Medical element (Air evacuation and Medical Detachment), we will be negotiating with both the National Guard Bureau and the supported states to find the right training and schedule fit.

The National Guard is superbly suited to do this mission – we have the skills, capabilities and available people. We are working to ensure that there will be no degradation to National Guard support to the overseas mission while also ensuring that the Governor retains sufficient capacity to accomplish state missions, to include disaster response and relief.



A Quarterly  
Maine Army National Guard  
Publication  
Volume 5, Issue 3

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GuardME is an unofficial quarterly publication authorized under the provisions of AR 360-81 and NGR 37-78 and produced by the Public Affairs Office, Military Bureau, Headquarters MEARNG, Camp Keyes, Augusta, ME 04333-0033. Telephone (207) 626-4333. Views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army. The Adjutant General is MG John W. Libby.



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## From the State Command Sergeant Major

by CSM Gregory R. Small



I was honored to be a part of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 152<sup>nd</sup> Field Artillery's final shoot in Gagetown on 21 June 2006. The FA did an excellent job in arranging that ceremony. In attendance were over 40 retirees from the FA community. All got a chance to pull a lanyard for the last time. CW4 (Ret) Larsen, who was a First Sergeant in B Battery for 18 years, was there and at the young age of 80, also got to pull a lanyard. It was a fitting tribute to the FA and their Past Commanders and Command Sergeants Major. A big thanks to LTC McFarland, MAJ Pooler and CSM Thibodeau for hosting a "class A" event!!

BG Boyles and I just returned from visiting the 240<sup>th</sup> Group in Afghanistan. We had a great visit with the men and women of that unit. The Group is performing exceptionally well on their assigned missions. They are very busy with construction missions all over the country. In a very short period of time, it was obvious to us that the unit is well led and highly motivated. Their attitudes and esprit de corps is nothing short of outstanding. Everyone back here in Maine can be extremely proud of the men and women in the 240<sup>th</sup> Group!!!

CSM Neal Genz has retired from the Maine Guard after serving for nearly 40 years. If you see him, pass on your thanks

and congratulations for an outstanding career. CSM Dave Wilkinson has taken the Command Sergeant Major position at Troop Command and CSM Rick Hannibal has taken the Command Sergeant Major position at the 133<sup>rd</sup> Engineer Battalion.

Congratulations to CSM Hannibal, CSM Barrett and SGM Eastman for their recent graduation at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy. All three went down range and represented Maine well.

G-RAP (Guard – Recruiter Assistance Program) has made some progress recently, but we still have some more room for improvement. I would ask all of our Guardsmen to sign up for G-RAP – not so much to be active recruiters and spend all of your spare time on recruiting, but to posture yourself for success if you should run into someone interested in the Guard. If you are signed up for G-RAP and you bring someone in, that's an easy \$2000.00 in your pocket. Get yourself ready because you never know what's going to happen.

Last but not least is SAFETY!!! During the time of high OPTEMPO, and increased activity, safety is paramount. Leaders, at all levels, need to fully understand risk assessment and risk mitigation plans. It does no good to assess risk unless you develop a



plan to mitigate or eliminate those identified risks. All training events need to have a risk assessment/mitigation plan. During our unit visits, we will be asking to see them. Let's make safety a priority for our troops!!



State Chaplain (LTC) Valmore Vigue

### The Chaplain's Corner "The Spiritual Warfare of Warfare"

As a chaplain in the military and a pastor in civilian life, I am often asked how I can balance the issues of war with my religious values. Even though I am a non-combatant personally, I am nevertheless part of an organization that takes human life, and perhaps violently. Sometimes it includes innocent civilians. How can I justify my involvement and claim to be a religious man? I will admit that it has not always been easy for me to face this issue. I am

also aware that many in the National Guard family ask this question of themselves. In "the old days", when Soldiers never deployed, entire military careers came and went without ever being in a combat environment. But now, Citizen-Soldiers have been thrust into the eye of the storm. We are being shot at and shooting back. The majority of Maine people are religious people. And more than ever, the question is being asked, "How can we justify taking the life of someone even in a war?"

Pacifism is a viable option for many. I don't blame those who refuse to bear arms or fight back. Those of us who disagree can at least respect and understand their views.

But it is not the path we in the National Guard have chosen. Yet we still have pangs of conscience over the realities of war. Can we quiet our conscience and remain faithful to God and our religious roots?

Most people understand that if people of faith refused to defend themselves, then only people without faith would rule the world!

But it gets even more complicated when people of faith are found on both sides of the battlefield. Religion seems to find its way into every war. How do we sort these things out?

It all boils down to what you believe and what you value. How strongly do you believe it and how strongly do you value it? For example, do you deeply treasure freedom and believe it is the right of others too? Is it worth dying for? Is it worth killing for? Do you value the right to worship as you choose? Do you value the right of future generations, perhaps your own grandchildren, to experience freedom, and the right to worship as they please? What you believe and how strongly you believe it will help you answer the question about whether you could take another person's life.

Recently, a middle-aged missionary couple in Zambia, Africa were attacked by 5 men bearing machetes and an AK-47. The man and his wife fought back but in the process badly wounded the others and killed one. In the few months since the incident, recovering in the states, they have asked themselves if what they did was right. Without hesitation, that husband now defends their actions as the only right thing to do. He valued and treasured his wife, and found it his duty to respond in her defense.

For me, it is the high value I place on my wife, my children, and my grand-children that enable me to justify the taking of life in war. Free people who love one another and respect the rights of others will rise up to defend themselves. This is a God-given right to protect and defend what we treasure. The greatest treasure is life itself. The Christian, Jewish, and Muslim faiths all look back to Genesis 1:26-27 which states that all people are created in the image of God, and therefore of infinite value.

War in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is very complex. There are many tragedies that defy explanation and break our hearts. As people of faith we struggle greatly with the taking of human life, even when it would save another. Such is the worth of a human being here in America. But since that is not the case with our enemy, a clash of values brings us to the battlefield. Although I accept this as a necessary evil, I continue to pray every day for the absolute minimal loss of life in the war against terrorism. I invite all people of faith to join with me.

# Guards Top Marathoners Travel To Nebraska With Big Goals For Upcoming Season

By Spc. Riley Huskey  
111<sup>th</sup> Press Camp Headquarters  
Nebraska Army National Guard

LINCOLN, NE -- More than 200 National Guard runners from across the United States descended upon Lincoln, NE, May 7, with one goal in mind: making the team.

Each year in May, Army and Air National Guard runners from across the United States head to Lincoln, NE, to compete in the Lincoln National Guard Marathon in hopes of securing a spot on the All-Guard Marathon Team.

Leading the way for the Guard was 1st Lt. William Bohlke, who crossed the finish line in 2:34.11, good enough for third overall in the 26.2-mile race that attracted more than 4,000 competitors.

"Going into the marathon, I was wondering what I was able to do," said Bohlke, a pilot in the Puerto Rico Air National Guard. "After

training hard for six months, I was not going to let my hard work go to waste; I was not going to let my training effect my performance."

After graduating from a rigorous and mentally challenging aircrew survival training course just two days before the race, Bohlke said he went into this year's National Guard Marathon Team trials with big goals.

"If I do not get deployed, I plan on winning the Air Force Marathon," Bohlke said. "I brought home the gold last year for the half-marathon, so there's no reason I can't win the full. My biggest goal would be to win all of the Armed Forces marathons."

Bohlke said he used his survival training as motivation for the Lincoln race.

"You can take whatever it is that you're doing and use it as motivation," he said. "I'm just happy. This race proves to me that I'm taking a step in the right direction. It's easy to get burnt out."

Bohlke credited the weather in Lincoln with also contributing to his winning time.

"There may have been a slight breeze today, but the overcast sky was the winning kicker," Bolke said. "When it came to keeping my pace on the course I kept telling myself, 'Stick to your guns, it'll all come back.'"

Bohlke wasn't the only top Guard runner with eyes set on big goals in the upcoming running season. Staff Sgt. James Bresette, a surface mechanic with Arkansas Army Guard's 224th Maintenance Co., said he was happy with his time in this year's Lincoln Marathon, which he completed in 2:43.12. Still, he's got bigger goals in mind.

"My overall goal for this season is to set a new personal record," said Bresette, who won the Guard's Masters (Over 40) Division and placed 10<sup>th</sup> overall in Lincoln. "Because I'm in school now, taking college Algebra, I've had to cut my mileage. After today, this season looks very promising; even with the cutbacks, I'm still right where I want to be."

"I'm getting old, but as long as I can keep running, I'm going to try and continue to reach that goal," said Bresette.

Bresette said that controlled running was a key for him in Lincoln.

"By about Mile 12, I thought I better maintain my motivation. I went out too fast, slowed down in the middle and knew I needed to finish strong," he said. "Between Mile 12 and 18, I slowed down, recovered and went back to my normal pace."

While the top men runners had their eyes focused squarely on making the annual "All Guard" Marathon Team, this year's top Guard female runner was simply excited just being in Lincoln. Sgt. Michelle Elliott, an AH-64 Apache helicopter mechanic with the Missouri Army Guard's 135<sup>th</sup> Aviation Battalion, traveled to Lincoln by herself as the only member of the Missouri team. She said she had just learned about the team shortly before the marathon.

That didn't mean that she didn't have high hopes, though. "I just wanted to come here and make the team," said Elliott, who won the Guard Women's race with a time of 3:21.47,



MAJ Jay Brock, 11th WMD/CST, running in the annual National Guard Marathon in Lincoln, Nebraska.



The 2006 Maine National Guard Marathon Team. First Row: MAJ Jay Brock (Army), MSgt Jay Ellingsen (Air), LtCol Mary Louise McEwen (Air)

Second Row: 1SG Anthony Prest (Army), Maj Tim Marquis (Air), Col Pete Golding (Army), MSgt Mo Kelleher (Air)

placing ninth overall. "It's such an honor to be here and now a member of this team—I just wish more people knew this program was here and available."

"I love what I do, and I love being in the Guard," Elliott said. "I don't know where I would be right now if I wasn't in the Guard—this has completely changed my life."

Elliott was ecstatic with the response she saw from the crowd. "I have not seen more excitement or motivation in the supporters that come out to cheer on the race than here in Lincoln," Elliott said. "Out of nine, this is the best marathon I've ever run."

The Lincoln National Guard Marathon serves as the annual qualifier for the "All-Guard" Marathon Team, which annually competes in races across the United States, representing the National Guard and assisting in the organization's recruiting efforts. The team is made up 40 men and 15 women.



# No Purple Hearts Awarded

Story by MSG Angela Blevins, PA  
Photos by CW4 Mark Houdlette

Recall a day when you have waited for a loved one at the airport and the sheer excitement that took over as the doors opened and that loved one, who has been gone for almost a year, has finally arrived. I experienced a similar excitement just knowing another Maine unit was returning safely. E-mails were exchanged and phone calls were being made as leaders scurried and prepared for their return. As Maine's 152<sup>nd</sup> Maintenance Company and a unit from Iowa arrived on that April day, I was among leaders from Maine and Iowa at the Fort Dix Airport to welcome these Soldiers back to the United States.

I checked my camera, as Maine leaders introduced themselves to their counterparts from Iowa. The plane door opened and the continuous strand of 180 + Soldiers stepped off the plane. Through the lens I could see the relieved faces of tired Soldiers carrying their weapons and backpacks as they disembarked the plane. Some carried pillows, others carried gifts. A constant blur of Soldiers walked down the stairs and greeted Maine's Adjutant General, MG "Bill" Libby, State CSM Greg Small and others. The contingent then loaded their busses and traveled to Fort Dix to begin their out processing, the final step that would finally take them home to Maine.

The unit left Maine in January of 2005, for training in Texas. There they met up with two other maintenance platoons from two states, one from Iowa and the other from Washington. Similar to a deck of cards, the shuffling and combining began and eventually a multi-state company was born. Soon after training the Company received its mission; they would operate as Security Force and not perform as a maintenance company. There were times they did have the opportunity to turn a few wrenches, but for the most part they were dedicated to the security mission.

Leaving Maine was the first chapter. Training as a Security Force came next. Commander, CPT Chris Moody said, "We used our Soldiering skills since we weren't

doing maintenance missions. They had to reach deep to find the skills they hadn't used in awhile."

Standing in the Commander's shadow was 1SG Daniel Grenier, leading the unit through its many challenges. His previous experience involved a 2 year tour in Korea.

mission with everyone. We didn't have any Purple Heart awards, no one was injured." He worried about his Soldiers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. His goal for the tour was to make sure that everyone made it home safely. The unit provided security for a dining facility, a computer area and a gym. The dining facility was where two Maine Soldiers were killed in December 2005. The Soldiers, SSG Lynn Poulin and SPC Thomas Dostie were former members of the 152<sup>nd</sup> Maintenance Company before being deployed with 133<sup>rd</sup> Engineer Battalion.

Their address use to be Street Dawn, on Camp Liberty. Day or night Soldiers could be found providing security along a 20 foot high wall, at a specific tower or force protection at a prison camp within the base. A "day in the life" is described by SPC Jacqueline Ellis, "I'd get up, take a shower, put my gear on and go to Guard Mount (Daily troop inspection prior to shift), then go to my security post. We would stand there, in a sweat box for 8 hours. By the time you got off shift, regardless of the time of day, you were tired. With the Interceptor Body Armor alone, then attaching the ammo, it weighed 40 lbs, and we had to carry extra stuff."

The duty included manning the watch towers and fence line and dealt with Soldiers of various ranks. The respect they gained was immeasurable, and it encouraged their own self confidence. Ellis said "We had to tell people of any rank to "stand fast." If I could do this and stand up to them, then I could probably stand up to most civilians."

SSG Greg Coleman, Squad Leader and member of the Iowa National Guard's, section manned the North Liberty towers seven days a week. Coleman said "The only thing anyone lacked overseas was being with family members, everything else was within walking distance. The gym facility was excellent, we watched movies, but over there you don't want a lot of people in one space, it draws target," safety was on their minds at all times.

1LT Wade went on this tour because the Unit needed a Lieutenant with a background not Maintenance specific. He explained his role, "It was Ground Hog Day, we got everyone up, then went to the towers, every day." He had to conduct Guard Mount, checking the Soldiers for proper gear and making sure they were at the correct posts at the proper times. In



Families, friends and fellow Soldiers were ready for the buses that brought the 152d Maintenance Company personnel back to the Augusta Armory after their 18 month deployment.

"That tour helped me thoroughly, but this tour was different. The Iraqi people are probably not for the War, but they are supporting the soldiers," said Grenier. Upon his arrival at Fort Dix Grenier commented "I am happy today, to successfully complete the year long



his off time, he added, "I did have time in the evening just to relax. The base had a Post Exchange, a Burger King, Popeye's, access to the INTERNET, E-mail, phones; you had instant contact with family. This wasn't like my first time in the military where you waited for letters or were looking for a phone."

SPC Ellis said, "The Iraqi Army was next to the tower, so we could interact with different groups. It was a good experience, to see how the people live over there, differently than we do here in Maine."

ISG Grenier's barber had told him "the US military is making a difference." The War was worth it; to experience the freedom now they never had before."



Mrs. MaryKate Moody, wife of 152d Maintenance Company Commander CPT Christopher Moody, sings 'God Bless America' to welcome the Soldiers home.



The bus carrying members of the 152d Maintenance Company pulls up to the Augusta Armory. An awaiting crowd of family and friends stands ready to greet the Soldiers.



SPC Zachary Kazan is interviewed by a local reporter shortly after his arrival at the Augusta Armory.





# SECFOR II

## *The Best Of Us!*

Photos and story by CW4 Mark Houdlette

How many times have we heard Soldiers tell of their first impressions arriving in a different temperate zone, stepping off the plane and being struck directly by heat and humidity? You are cognizant of your relocation, having prepared for a trip that includes dramatic climate change, but the reality of this impending adjustment is brought to bear only when the sauna like winds hit your face, your lungs fill up with moisture saturated air, and sweat beads immediately build up on the brow. It's then you know the journey you have been anticipating has begun.

Courtesy of Maine's OSACOM detachment, I had the opportunity to fly down to Camp Shelby on a Beechcraft King Air to gain a first hand look at the training SECFOR II is receiving prior to their mobilization to Iraq.

So It Begins.....

Each journey begins with a single step. That first step was taken, 22 April 2006, as the newly formed Security Force group, dubbed SECFOR II (for the second such unit sent

from Maine) boarded buses at the Augusta Armory, destination Portland, Maine, with further movement to Camp Shelby, Mississippi. There, SECFOR II began training in earnest for their impending insertion into the fragile situation in Iraq that is Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The ceremony was an extremely emotional moment, the calm before the storm. "The Soldiers received the Activation Ceremony in Augusta very positively," said SECFOR II Commander CPT Kent Cousins. "It was great to see all the support provided to Maine Soldiers.

Maine truly shines in the "above and beyond" effort demonstrated in support of our troops. We have discussed and shown pictures, internet sites and stories to the Soldiers that were mobilized from Wisconsin, Nevada, and Arizona, and they are envious of the support that Maine provides to its troops. We are truly fortunate. The soldiers can't say enough thanks for the hard work put forth in the Activation Ceremony from all that were involved."









## SECFOR II

*Continued from page 8*

SECFOR II took their turn adjusting to the heat and humidity their new home had to offer. The Soldiers of SECFOR II come from varying locations in Maine, anywhere from Aroostook County to Southern Maine. On average Soldiers experienced a 30 degree difference of temperature, compounded with a significant increase in humidity, within a few hours of their departure from Augusta.

### **Come Together**

Upon arrival at Camp Shelby, SECFOR II fell under the command and control of 1/121<sup>st</sup> Field Artillery Battalion, a Wisconsin based unit, and was now known as A Battery. With this, CPT Cousins and his staff had to integrate with the new Battalion staff and would welcome a new group of Soldiers into their own Command. Soldiers from both the Nevada and Arizona Army National Guard, like our own SECFOR II, were assigned to the 1/121<sup>st</sup> Field Artillery Battalion and would now work under CPT Cousins' command. Combining different Soldiers from different states, different backgrounds and different Commands could present a number of different training obstacles. But for A Battery that was not going to be the case.

"The Nevada/Arizona slice of soldiers are a very professional group of soldiers. I'm truly fortunate with the experience they bring to the unit. The transition of blending in the variety of soldiers with various skills has been very smooth. As with the Maine Soldiers, the Nevada/Arizona group is deep with great leadership and professional soldiers. The consolidated leadership team initially worked diligently to squelch any 'Maine vs. Nevada/Arizona' issues that may have developed and the unit has developed into a strong, proficient group," said Cousins.

Many of the Nevada Soldiers were members of an Armored Cavalry unit that had spent the preceding two years at the National Training Center (NTC) in Fort Irwin, California, working as opposing forces for the desert training that NTC specializes in, therefore, this group comes to A Battery highly trained with a strong leadership team.

### **Something New**

Once training began, each individual Soldier was required to start wearing the field gear they are expected to wear in Iraq. Helmet, load bearing equipment belt, and gas mask are familiar field equipment for Soldiers, but operations in Iraq required an unfamiliar piece of essential gear be

issued and worn. SECFOR II soldiers were immediately issued Interceptor Body Armor, or IBAs.

Wearing the IBA, which by itself weighs over 16 pounds, has impacted the training for SECFOR II along with being one of the most noticeable differences between them and Soldiers that would be in Maine participating in Annual Training this summer. "It's been hot. We've been losing some weight because of it [the weather], and wearing the IBA," said SGT Andrew Bugbee, member of SECFOR II. "I've lost 10-12 pounds [since arriving at Camp Shelby]."

### **Refreshing their skills**

SECFOR II is a fusion of many different soldier skills drawn from the ranks of the Maine Army National Guard. Although Soldiers trained specifically in Infantry skills are certainly represented in the group, the nature of SECFOR II's mission did not

of training."

On the day of our visit, SECFOR II was participating in Reflexive Fire training on the Close Combat Assault Course. The exercise required hands on participation on a short range, practicing how to hold their individual weapons in a "ready position" and how to engage short range targets quickly. Soldiers practiced working in teams learning how to move together and communicate.

At first, teams of four went through the course without ammunition, practicing how to reload their weapon, switching between their primary weapon and their 9mm secondary weapon, and how to communicate to team leaders when problems arose such as running out of ammunition or clearing a jammed weapon. Once the team rehearsed, the course was conducted with live ammunition.

While half of SECFOR II participated on this range, the others were on a similar but more elaborate range a couple miles away. The second range was emphasizing the same quick reaction skills while stressing

constant group communication, but in a more realistic "lane" with multiple targets presenting themselves at random intervals. All the while, soldiers are wearing their field gear and IBAs.

This type of training in the oppressive heat and humidity that both Camp Shelby and Iraq will offer, drains the body water through sweat, so the now familiar Camel Bak® water bladder is stock equipment for every soldier. Camel Bak's® vary in size, but those issued to the soldiers hold 3 liters of water. Soldiers reported refilling their Camel Bak's® three times or more on the most oppressive days. It's no wonder the average Soldier claimed losing 10 pounds or more since their arrival at Camp Shelby.

Hydration during training is critical to remain healthy, so the Officers and NCOs of SECFOR II take the necessary steps to ensure each Soldier is drinking a lot of liquid. Although team leaders frequently checked to ensure hydration was taking place, it was obvious Soldiers had incorporated good hydration practices in their normal routines. It was not unusual during breaks in the action for a Soldier to reach over, grab the Camel Bak's® tube that drapes over the Soldier's shoulder, and drink a quick burst of water.

### **Leadership Equals Strength**

As we arrived at the training site, 1SG Paul Eubank spoke with one of my travel partners, CSM Neil Genz, Command Sergeant Major for Troop Command, and asked him to recognize one of the Soldiers within the Battery with a CSM coin. Many Generals and Command Sergeant Majors have with them coins specifically designed to represent their office and command. The coins are presented



SPC Nathan Williams (left) receives a 52d Troop Command coin from CSM Neil Genz (center) while SECFOR II 1SG Paul Eubank (right) looks on. These types of coins are given on occasion by leaders within a Command as a form of immediate recognition for outstanding performance of duties.

require this as a prerequisite for participation in this mission. Amongst the different skill sets represented within the ranks, such as Engineers, Artillerymen, and cooks, the one common denominator that was required for participation was the basic Soldier skills each Soldier trains on throughout the year.

Skills that are required for deployment to Iraq, along with practicing their basic soldier skills, are being taught through different field training exercises at Camp Shelby. CPT Cousins stated, "The training we've experienced at Mobilization Station Camp Shelby has been very good quality training. It's easy to see the challenges the Mobilization Station has with the numerous quantity of soldiers and units that are training at one time. The Soldiers all have expressed their likes and dislikes for particular training events, but considering the possibilities we've seen in the past with units having missions changed in Theater, we've received a very well rounded, 'Warrior Ethos' based block



to Soldiers who have distinguished themselves and are instantly recognized. On this day, 1SG Eubank had just such a deserving Soldier.

SPC Nathan Williams was quickly recognized as a leader and was selected to be a team leader within SECFOR II prior to movement to Mississippi. During one training exercise SPC Williams' squad leader was injured requiring him to be removed from training to seek medical attention. In training, as it is in Iraq, this situation requires leadership within the squad to adjust and take over the previous squad leader's responsibilities. SPC Williams was next in line, so without hesitation, he stepped forward, took charge of the squad, and completed the training exercise.

When asked about this, SPC Williams said only, "... I did what I had to do," but the act and the professionalism shown at this level is emblematic of what a casual observer quickly understands about the entire SECFOR II group. This is a uniquely qualified and dedicated group of Soldiers.



SSG Joshua Willett fires at a pop-up target on a live fire range at Camp Shelby, MS. Not only do the Soldiers of SECFOR II have to fire accurately at targets that present themselves in a split second, they are doing it in hot and humid weather with many pounds of extra gear such as the Individual Ballistic Armor.

## Forward March

On 9 May 2006, grim news of a roadside bomb that killed two Maine Soldiers from SECFOR I, SSG Dale Kelley and SSG David Veverka, and injured a third, PVT Christopher Frazier, was received in Maine and by SECFOR II in Mississippi. Because SECFOR II Soldiers are training to play a similar role as currently deployed SECFOR I, I asked CPT Cousins exactly how the soldiers reacted to this devastating news. "The news of the unfortunate casualties in SECFOR I was a very somber moment for the Soldiers of SECFOR II. The senior leadership, to include our Nevada/Arizona Soldiers, were very proactive in providing counsel to the soldiers. They were very successful in sustaining the morale and motivation of the Soldiers to drive on and continue with our mission."

With SECFOR II making their final preparations prior to mobilization, leaders

have been paying close attention to mentally preparing each soldier for the challenges Iraq will bring. Cousins said, "We have been keeping the Soldiers mission focused while concentrating on building the core teams they will be operating in on our mission. No matter what the mission was, how long their previous mission was, how often they went on mission, or how short the turn around times between missions were; the Soldiers stepped right up to carry on with their mission. Truly awe inspiring Soldiers."

Let there be no misunderstanding, the training SECFOR II received at Camp Shelby is grueling. Some Soldiers are learning new skills, most are reacquainting with old ones. Equipment such as the IBA and various weapons systems are being used for the first time by many in an environment they are unaccustomed to.

The training schedule is full, packed with action, events and details that keep SECFOR II busy 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Since they have arrived there have been very few

days off. Their diet has changed, their ability to sleep regular hours has changed, the climate has changed and the purpose of their daily work has changed. The often used movie quote "Toto, we're not in Kansas anymore," has gained a new level of meaning for SECFOR II.

Yet from all this, you see the shining essence of soldiering first hand. With a wink and a nod they tell stories of their new Spartan existence, of the bruises acquired, and the aches and pains they have on the right day. Younger

Soldiers are living the TV commercial that first enticed them to join, older soldiers eager to mentor the young and show they still have the stuff that makes one a Soldier. To a man they understand the mission and why they have been asked to leave home and assist in Operation Iraqi Freedom. No myopic television news dogma at work here, SECFOR II has enough Soldiers beginning their second mobilization to Iraq to help provide first timers the first hand knowledge only an OIF veteran can truly understand.

The mission is essential; it is vital and has merit. It is worth the risk, it is worth the cost. The soldiers of SECFOR II understand this and are working to help make their mark in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Their enthusiasm and professionalism are the best of what Maine can offer; they are truly the best of us.



SGT Andrew Bugbee, Caribou, Maine, Maine Army National Guard - "I'm just going day by day. I've been over there before, I kinda know what to expect." "Just looking forward to getting over there, getting it done, and coming home and being with my family again." "I think we're starting to mesh together and we'll do a good job over there".



CPL Greg Sanchez, Las Vegas, Nevada, Nevada Army National Guard - "As I prepare to go over again, I know I have a lot of lessons that I've learned the first time, that will payoff the second time, like the things I should and shouldn't do. I know with my Squad Leader already having been over there, with myself and others... I'm learning things from the EPW guys, and hopefully they are gaining something from me with my infantry background."



# Jeopardy! Army Style

Story by SSG Robert C. Pearce, PA  
Photos by MSG Angela Blevins, PA

I'll take Military Weapons for \$500 Alex. The question: Do you know what the Final Protective Line (FPL) of the M-60 machine gun is? The answer: What is: It's always the number one target on an M60 range card. Correct!

This and/or other questions await you as a participant in the Soldier or NCO of the Year Competition. Alex Trebek will not be asking you the questions and you will not be in a fancy studio in front of a studio audience. On this years State Board you would be in front of State CSM Greg Small, CSM Neil Genz and CSM Dave Wilkinson and asked questions on a variety of military topics ranging from leadership to first aid, military weapons or military customs and courtesies. These are only a few of about fifty topics to study for. If you make it to the National Competition and win, the prizes are not too shabby. Previous winners have received a Notebook computer, \$1,000 savings bond and a family vacation to the Armed Force's Recreation Center 'Shades of Green' at Disney World in Orlando, FL.

SSG Richard "Rick" Bucklin from HSC 133<sup>rd</sup> Engineers in Portland, made his appearance before the board. His last appearance before a board was at a promotion board when he was up for SGT "a long time ago," he chuckles, before the current STPA promotion system was put in place. He said he was more nervous then because he was younger. He added, "I'm a police officer now and deal with the public all the time, so going up to talk to people is no big deal." He admits he could have studied a little more but was proud to have been nominated to the board.

According to CSM Small, the selection process ideally begins at the unit level when a Soldier is selected by his first line supervisor to compete. The winner at the unit level would move on to the battalion level and so forth until the State level is reached. That is where CSM Small constructs the State Board and Soldiers who won at the lower command levels compete for the State title of NCO or Soldier of the year. The next step would be the regional selection process where the competition heats up and State winners throughout the Northeast compete. If you make the grade and reach the 1<sup>st</sup> U.S. Army board, usually held at Fort Stewart Georgia, CSM Small says the intensity increases, "It's almost two full days of competition. You do a P.T. Test, weapons qualification, CTT, day and night land navigation, attend a personal appearance board in class A's, write an essay and attend a

formal social. When you get to that level it's pretty intense but extremely rewarding." When asked if there was a "runner-up" at the national level, CSM Small says there is only one winner but quickly added "Obviously, there are no losers, if you get to that level you have some really squared away Soldiers." CSM Small wanted to congratulate all the nominees and said, "I think it's important to recognize all the work and dedication these Soldiers put into the competition. A couple of years ago I took a Soldier down to the 1<sup>st</sup> Army level that put about 500 hours into preparation for the competition. It takes a lot of time and dedication."

In our last edition of "GuardME" we quickly acknowledged the State winners. Once again we congratulate SSG Michael Wall, NCO of the Year and SPC Kristen Lee, Soldier of the Year. Both of these fine Soldiers made it to the regional competition in Vermont! Hoohah!

## **Congratulations to the 2006 Soldier and NCO of the Year**



*SSG Michael Wall  
11th Civil Support Team (WMD)  
NCO Of The Year*



*SPC Kristen Lee  
1136th Transportation Company  
Soldier Of The Year*



*There are a lot of stripes at this table. The 2006 Soldier/NCO of the Year Board, seated from left to right, CSM David Wilkinson, State CSM Gregory Small, CSM Neil Genz and SGM Norris Eastman, fire off a volley of very technical questions to SSG Michael Wall.*



# Pursuit of Dreams; Pursuit of Wings

Story By SGT Rhonda Philbrick

From the dawn of time man has marveled at the solid surface of earth below his feet and gazed upon the vast sky above with wonder and amazement. Man's perseverance to soar amongst the clouds has transformed aviation from air balloons used during the Civil War to the technologically advanced world of aviation that exists today. For those men and women who have dreamed of flying, the Maine Army National Guard can help make that dream become reality.

The UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter is one of the most exciting tactically advanced aircraft for combat rescue and reconnaissance. The term MEDEVAC means Medical Evacuation. The Maine Army National Guard utilizes MEDEVAC helicopters for air ambulance evacuations, providing higher survivability with exceptional en route patient care capability complimented by a state-of-the-art medical interior, speed and long range capability.

Those chosen to be pilots are the elite. They are individuals who possess the courage and determination to attain their goals. Warrant Officers are highly specialized experts, trainers and leaders. They provide valuable skills, guidance and expertise to commanders and organizations in their particular field.

CW2 Meagan Lombard began her military career as an Enlisted Soldier in the Maine Army National Guard's 195<sup>th</sup> Army Band, located within a stones throw of the Bangor Flight Facility. Fascinated by the helicopters

that flew overhead, her curiosity began taking over. She looked up and wondered, "Could I ever be given the opportunity to fly?"

Lombard quickly inquired about eligibility and began the sometimes daunting task of being interviewed and completing an in-depth application to become a warrant officer candidate. Lombard said, "At times it can seem overwhelming to begin something so new." CW2 Erica Green, an experience pilot with the 112<sup>th</sup> Medical Company, spoke with CW2 Lombard before she left to complete Warrant Officer Candidate and Flight School. "It was a relief to talk to someone who has been through everything, I became more excited to begin training," said Lombard.

The first six weeks of training are intense and are designed to train candidates in their technical expertise and develop leadership and management skills through progressive assignment and education. At the conclusion of this training, candidates officially become federally recognized by Congress and are promoted to Warrant Officer One (WO1).

Newly promoted and after a few days off, WO1 Lombard began Initial Entry Rotary Wing training. The training consisted of four phases; preflight Instruction, 60 hours in a training helicopter and simulator, and Instrument training. The last phase included combat-mission orientation.

Lombard expressed her first glimmer of accomplishment and excitement when

describing her first flight called the "Nickel Ride." "I had to bring a nickel to my instructor with my birth year on it. He kept them to signify all the pilots that he instructed." At 2,000 feet her instructor gave her the controls for the first time. "It took more coordination than I thought." Lombard was both nervous and excited on her first solo flight with her "stick buddy," (another student whom you are assigned to for the duration of flight



*Designed primarily for troop transport and medical evacuation missions, the UH-60 Blackhawk is also capable of sling loading loads via the hook underneath the helicopter. Transporting this load of logs was part of a training exercise the 112th Medical Company participated in at Baxter State Park.*



*Originally from Aroostook County, a former Bass player in the 195th Army Band, CW2 Meagan Lombard had a dream to fly helicopters for the Maine Army National Guard. She now is a UH-60 Blackhawk pilot in the 112th Medical Company.*





# 240th Engineer Group: Off To Afghanistan

Story By MSG Angela Blevins

As memory of the attack on the World Trade Center lingers with the thought of why we are at war, another Maine Guard unit received their orders and bravely stepped forward. On a snowy January day at the Augusta Armory many family members and friends waved goodbye as the 240<sup>th</sup> Engineer Group departed for Camp Atterbury, Indiana.

In April, after months of training, the unit received their final send off ceremony at the National Guard Armory. A poster of Joshua Chamberlain stood on an easel as a backdrop to inspire. As in any event in the military, the team worked together to prepare for the ceremony, the Honor Guard practiced, the weapons were carried and placed. Then the unit uniformly marched in, took their seats, and the ceremony began.

"While in Indiana we have spent four months training on road marches, weapon qualifications, guard tower training, medical aid, and convoy operations. The company has accelerated and we have accomplished this mission," said MAJ Marlene Lajoie.

BG Robert Carmichael said, "It's a great honor to be here for this day. With Joshua Chamberlain posters in the background you

think about a warrior, hero, citizen soldier, I stand here humbled in front of you, and think about those same things in each and everyone of you. You are all heroes in my mind, certainly Citizen Soldiers. I can't think of anything more fitting than to have a picture of Joshua Chamberlain behind us and to be standing in front of you at this send off ceremony."

Not unlike previous units, they too will be part of history. He assured them that while they were away their families would be watched over and taken care of so that they could concentrate on their mission overseas.

The final speaker was the Base Commander, COL Barry Richmond. He commented on the great job the unit had done while at Camp Atterbury. He then told an

inspirational story about a pilot that had flown 75 missions before being shot down. After the pilot ejected and floated down to earth, he thought about the soldier who packed his parachute. Richmond asked the Soldiers, "Who is packing your chute? And whose parachute are you packing? Each one of you depends on someone. And equally someone is depending on you." These thoughts remind all Soldiers that we are a team; that there is someone depending on you within the Guard and on the home front.

Eighty two Soldiers arrived that day and were ready to deploy. The unit left for Afghanistan in April.



The 240th Engineer Group gather for a group photo at Camp Atterbury, Indiana prior to their departure to Afghanistan. Photo by MSG Angela Blevins.

## News Flash

**June 1, 2006 – Augusta, Maine:** U.S. Rep. Michael Michaud had a problem. His fork lift operator license was about to expire. He needed help finding an expert recertification course. Where did he go? He went to the Maine Army National Guard. SFC Gilman Thibeault and the folks at the CSMS gave Rep. Michaud a written and hands on test and successfully recertified the Congressman as a fork lift operator, still the only licensed fork lift operator in the U.S. Congress. Photo by CW4 Mark Houdlette



**July 14, 2006 - Camp Shelby, Mississippi:** July 14, 2006 - Captain Kent Cousins, Commander of Maine's second security force group (SECFOR II), renders a salute during a short ceremony held at Camp Shelby, Mississippi. SECFOR II has been officially renamed A Battery, 121st Field Artillery Battalion, and has deployed with a Wisconsin based Field Artillery Battalion. The ceremony was attended by a number of high ranking military officers and civilian dignitaries, most notably Wisconsin's Governor Jim Doyle and Maine's Adjutant General Major General Bill Libby. Photo by CW4 Mark Houdlette

**July 13, 2006 - Bog Brook Training Site, Gilead, Maine:** Once again the Family Program sponsored a Youth Camp for children of Maine National Guard Soldiers and Airmen. Pictured here CW2 Christopher Bean helps youth campers get their kayaks in the water prior to a kayak trip. Photo by SPC Kelsey Vance.







## THE PROMOTION BOARD

### **BRIGADIER GENERAL**

BRENT BOYLES

### **LIEUTENANT COLONEL**

ELDON HARDWICK

### **CAPTAIN**

STEPHEN DOYLE  
LEON ORDWAY

### **FIRST LIEUTENANT**

JESSICA CAMPBELL  
STEPHEN SPEARIN  
NORMAN STICKNEY

### **SECOND LIEUTENANT**

JASMINE CHASE  
RYAN CURRY

### **CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER FOUR**

BENJAMIN AYER  
NICHOLAS WALZ

### **Warrant Officer One**

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NORRIS EASTMAN  
WILLIAM FRANCIS

### **MASTER SERGEANT**

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### **FIRST SERGEANT**

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GREGORY MCNAMEE  
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BROCK CATON  
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JONATHAN HUNT  
SHONN PERRY  
JACOB PIERCE  
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MATTHEW ROGERS

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LOYD BRONER  
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TODD HAFFORD  
JESSICA LARRABEE  
SRI LAUSIER  
SETH MILTON  
FREDRICK MOODY  
KIM PURINGTON  
SARAH SCOTT  
AARON SWASEY  
SCOTT THURSTON

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ALEX BLAISDELL  
ALAN BOILLARD  
SUSAN BRIDGE  
THEODORE CUMMINGS  
ROBERT ELLIOTT  
CHRISTOPHER FRASER  
MICHEAL GANT  
KYLE GAVIN  
WILLIAM GREELEY  
RUSSELL GREEN  
THOMAS HARVEY  
SHANE KAVIN  
DARREN LAPOINTE  
CAIRA LAUDIERI  
CRAIG LIGHT  
ROBERT MARTHIA  
JASON MCFARLAND  
MATTHEW MCKENNEY

MASON MOTEJUNAS  
RUSSELL NIXON  
JOEL PAGLIARULO  
CHRISTOPHER SMITH  
FREEMAN SPRAGUE  
DAVID SWEATT  
WADE WALKER  
NIKE WHITMORE

### **PRIVATE FIRST CLASS**

NICOLE ALBRIGHT  
KELLY BARNETT  
DANIEL BELANGER  
BEAU BLANCHARD  
EDWARD BOLES  
DONALD CHRETIEN  
MICHAEL COMEAU  
LONNIE DELANO  
NICHOLAS DOHERTY  
AMBER DOW  
AUTUMN ELLIOT  
PATRICK FOLEY  
JEFFREY GARDNER  
GEORGE GEHRLING  
NORMAN GILMORE  
HUGH GOODFELLOW  
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DAVID JONES  
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CHRISTOPHER LANE  
JAMES LAROSA  
DEREK LESS  
RICHARD LIGHT  
WADE LIGHT  
KEVIN MACDONALD  
BRIAN MCCOMB  
RAYMOND MCCRARY  
NATHANIEL MCCRAY  
MATTHEW MCGEE  
DARREN MCINTYRE  
JOSHUA MILLER  
KYLE MILLETT  
JEFFREY NADEAU  
JOSHUA NADEAU  
JENNIFER NELSON  
ANDREW OBRIEN  
MICHAEL PAPA  
SARAH PAULEY  
CHAD PERREAULT  
BRANDON PERRIN

JORDAN RICHARD  
ELYSIA ROBINSON  
SARAH RODIER  
DONALD SARGENT  
GARTE SOSMENA  
JOSHUA SPEAR  
CHRISTOPHER STOVER  
MATTHEW TROTT  
DEREK VIOLETTE  
DOUGLAS WEAVER

### **PRIVATE E-2**

BRIDGETT AMES  
RYAN BLAKE  
ELIZABETH BOYNTON  
ADAM BUCKLEY  
MICHAEL CARR  
ROBIN CASTLE  
GLENN COLE  
JUSTIN CORSON  
JAMES CRONE  
RYAN DAVIS  
WARREN DOUGLAS  
SARAH DYAR  
HUGH DYER  
CHAD FOURNIER  
PAUL GERMAIN  
ERIC GRAY  
DEREK GRENIER  
ALEXIS GROVER  
LINDSEY HALL  
TIMOTHY JOHNSON  
NICOLE JUTRAS  
GEOFFREY KING  
NOAH LAKE  
CHARLES LAMB  
JUSTIN LOWE  
KEVIN MCBREAIRTY  
BRANDT MCCOLLETT  
AARON PERRY  
KATHRYN PHILLIPS  
SETH PHILLIPS  
JEREMY PLOWMAN  
MICHAEL RAMOS  
DAVID RICHARDSON  
JASON ROCKWELL  
JUSTIN ROY  
AARON SMITH  
DEAN STAPLES  
BENJAMIN STEVENS  
APRIL STULTZ

KEVIN SUND  
TODD THOMPSON  
JOSHUA TILTON  
DUSTIN TURNER  
MICHAELWEBSTER  
MATHEW WIGHT  
TYLER WING  
SARAH ZIEHM

### **PRIVATE E-1**

JOSHUA ALVES  
CHRISTOPHER  
ARSENAULT  
WILLIAM BABB  
LESLIE BATCHELDER  
GREGORY BENJAMIN  
DERICK BOLTON  
NICHOLAS BRANN  
CASSAUNDR CLARK  
CHAD CLEAVES  
BRANDON ELLIOT  
ERIC FRAZIER  
BRYAN GLENN  
DANIEL HALL  
JOSHUA KELLERMAN  
STEPHEN KILCOLLINS  
SHANE LACASSE  
RANDY LIBBY  
JACK LITTLE  
CHRISTOPHER LLOYD  
BRANDON MCCLAIN  
CODY MYERS  
JONATHAN NEWCOMB  
KENDALL NOKE  
BENJAMIN PEPPER  
ALLAN PIPER  
BRADLEY RANDALL  
ADAM REED  
CHRISTOPHER RICKETT  
RYAN ROY  
AARON SARGENT  
VANESSA SASSMAN  
JOHN THOMAS  
JOSEPH TOWNE  
DAVID TOZIER  
STEVEN WEBSTER  
TYLER WEERDEN  
KEITH WHITTEMORE  
ROBERT WILSON

*This listing is derived directly from SIDPERS data and represents individuals who were promoted during the time period 1 April - 30 June 2006. This information was accurate as of the date the report was compiled.*



*Governor John Baldacci and MG Bill Libby greet two Soldiers standing guard during the spring flooding in Southern Maine. Photo by MSG Angela Blevins*



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